

**AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A plate attachable to spinal vertebrae comprising:  
~~a plurality of first and second apertures for passage of screws which attach to respective spinal vertebrae, all of the apertures being defined along a single axis, and one of the apertures being defined as a slot; and by the plate for the passage of screws which attach to the spinal vertebrae; and~~  
5 a cleat extending from an interior face of said plate.
2. (Currently Amended) The plate of claim 1 ~~wherein said axis is a longitudinal axis in which one of said first and second apertures is a slot.~~
3. (Original) The plate of claim 1 including a central portion having a reduced width.
4. (Currently Amended) The plate of claim 1 wherein said cleat is aligned along a common transverse axis with the center of ~~one of the apertures, -said first aperture.~~
5. (Currently Amended) The plate of claim 1 including a second cleat wherein said second cleat is aligned along a common transverse axis with the center of ~~one of the apertures, -said second aperture.~~
6. (Original) The plate of claim 1 wherein the plate is bowed along its width.
7. (Currently Amended) A plate system for holding two vertebrae apart comprising:  
~~first and second screws for attaching to said respective ones of the vertebrae;~~

a plate having interior and exterior faces;  
5        said plate defining at least two apertures; along a single axis, the apertures being spaced to be associated with respective ones of the vertebrae and sized for passage of the screws, and one of the apertures being a slot; and  
            said interior face being provided with a cleat.

8.        (Original) The system of claim 7 wherein said screws are of a cancellous type.

9.        (Original) The system of claim 7 wherein said plate has a length not exceeding 43 millimeters and a width not exceeding 12 millimeters.

10.       (Original) The system of claim 7 wherein said cleat is in the form of a conical spike.

11.       (Original) The system of claim 7 wherein said plate further includes a leading edge and a trailing edge and a beam integrally formed within said plate, said beam extending from said leading edge to trailing edge in an unbroken line generally along a centerline of said plate.

12 - 18.       (Cancelled)

19.       (New ) The plate of claim 1 wherein said axis is offset from a central axis of the plate.

20.       (New ) The plate of claim 7 wherein said single axis is offset from a central axis of the plate.

21.       (New) A plate attachable to spinal vertebrae comprising:  
            a plurality of apertures for passage of screws which attach to respective and adjacent spinal vertebrae, all of the apertures being defined along a single axis, and one of the apertures being defined as a slot; and

5           a cleat extending from an interior face of said plate.

22. (New) The plate of claim 21 wherein said axis is a longitudinal axis.
23. (New) The plate of claim 21 including a central portion having a reduced width.
24. (New) The plate of claim 21 wherein said cleat is aligned along a common transverse axis with the center of one of the apertures.
25. (New) The plate of claim 21 including a second cleat wherein said second cleat is aligned along a common transverse axis with the center of one of the apertures.
26. (New) The plate of claim 21 wherein adjacent ones of the passages are aligned with the adjacent spinal vertebrae.